423 The richest farmer in the rural vicinity of Gondar,
427 a member of the Qemant (Cushitic-speaking) ethnic group, owns 8 gasha (about 400 acres), which is considered fabulous wealth by his Amhara neighbors. However, with the aid of his sons and servants, he cultivates only one gasha at any given time. He parcels out the remaining 7 gasha, except for some fallow land, to landless tenant farmers, many of them ex-slaves, usually in plots no bigger than 10 qada (about 4 acres), which is considered the limit one man can plow and seed without help. The rent they pay him consists of one "madiga" of tyeff grain (about 25 kilo); payable by each. Each also pays him 1/2 madiga of barley, referred to as "qolo", tribute to his "household". His agents also collect the 10% tithe, in produce, which he is expected to pass on to the government, and the new Eth$4.- education tax. He invest part of his profits in cows for his increasing herds.

423 For purposes of taxation, of peasants, the govern-
651 ment treasury must rely on the judgment of the headman, ("cheqa shum"), who is difficult to check because the land is unmeasured and a "gasha" is a flexible concept. Therefore, his supervisor, usually the mislane, can only base a check on past, customary payments.

[602] Taxcollectors are known to be generous when deal-
423 ing with even distant kinfolk, or with priests and
651 their relatives, and to even out the receipts by pres-
653 sure on low-class ethnic minorities, justifying this by claiming that the ethnics have unstated income from their handicrafts.